

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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the North Sea Route

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. The Main Administration of the North Sea Route (Glavnoye Upravleniye Severomorskogo Puti - Glavsevmorput') in Moscow is the agency in charge of exploration and exploitation of the North Sea Route. Originally this administration was in Leningrad, but during World War II it was evacuated to Moscow where it has remained ever since. This administration is independent of the Ministry of the Merchant Marine and is directly subordinate to the USSR Council of Ministers, most probably to Deputy President Beriya. Until 1946, the head of the Mian Administration of the North Sea Route was Afanas'yev, later appointed Minister of the Merchant Marine, where he replaced Shershov. Afanas'yev held this new position for about a week, became "ill", went on sick-leave, and was never heard of since.

2. The Glavsevmorput' has the highest priority on expert personnel needed for carrying out its projects. Every individual requested by this administration, regardless of his position and its importance, is immediately released and placed at the disposal of Glavsevmorput'.

3. Another government agency, closely connected with Glavsevmorput', the "Ministry of the Interior Far-East Construction Project" (Dal'nevostochnoye Stroitel'stvo Ministerstva Vnutrennikh Del - "Dal'stry MVD") enjoys the same kind of priority on technicians and workers. It is in charge of construction projects in the arctic regions, and in regions adjoining the Sea of Okhotsk.

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The largest regional administration of this agency is in Magadan 5934N-15048E at the northern end of the Sea of Okhotsk, which is referred to as the "Capital of Captives" (Stolitsa Zaklyuchennykh). The offices of the Far-East Construction Project are located in Moscow on Stepana Razina Ulitsa #7. This agency conducts large scale recruitment of construction and mechanical engineers, technicians, motor specialists, mechanics, drivers, radio operators, accountants, economists, skippers of small vessels (up to 200 tons), and all kinds of skilled workers. The recruitment campaign has become especially active since 1947, when recruitment stations of the Far-East Construction Project were opened in all larger centers of the USSR.

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skilled labor for the project is provided by the hundreds of slave labor camps located around Magadan. In 1946

very large groups of slave laborers, probably up to two million people, were transported to Magadan in 1943 via the Sea of Okhotsk.

4. The Hydrographical Institute of the Main North Sea Route Administration (Gidrograficheskiy Institut Glavsevmorput') in Leningrad is an educational institution on the university level which prepares specialists for Glavsevmorput'. It has three departments:

- (a) Hydrographical
- (b) Hydro-meteorological
- (c) Navigation (Shturmanskiy)

The course in all departments lasts five to six years. The requirements for candidates are ten years of previous education, a successful examination and political reliability. The annual entrance quota is 120 students. Total attendance at the institute is about 600-700 students. The institute enjoys an excellent reputation and is favored by the government. Students wear merchant marine uniform and are given higher scholarships than other college students.

5. With respect to weather problems encountered on the North Sea Route

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the navigation on this route is usually open from the end of June to the beginning of September. Vessels proceed in convoys, headed by ice-breakers, at the speed of seven to eight miles per hour. Vessels are not allowed to proceed individually beyond Dudinka 6925N-8610E because of the dangers connected with the constant movement of ice in this region. Going east from Dudinka navigation conditions are extremely difficult. The several small ports located between Dudinka and the Bering Strait are completely isolated and lucky if they are visited once a year by a ship bringing supplies and food. By the North Sea Route a voyage from Arkhangel to Vladivostok lasts six weeks. The main port on the route is Dudinka. in 1940 a group of destroyers (eskadrennykh minonostsev) went by this route from Murmansk to Vladivostok.

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6. The practical results, however, achieved on this route until now, certainly do not justify all the efforts and financial sacrifices made by the Soviet Government. Economically, in the sense of reclamation and cultivation of the arctic regions, the project is a complete failure. In spite of this, Soviet propaganda makes extensive efforts to present the project as a success to the outside world. In my opinion, this route is important only for military-naval purposes, and especially for the operation of the naval air-force.

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it can be assumed that in the post-war period the Soviets have constructed several military air bases along this route.

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